Testimony in support of HB 6759
Submitted By:
Elizabeth Aschenbrenner

Good afternoon Sen. McCrory, Rep. Curry, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Elizabeth Aschenbrenner. I live in Coventry and I am currently a consultant who has been in the early childhood field for 40 years.

I am testifying in support of HB 6759 An Act Concerning Early Childhood. I want to thank you for recognizing in section 1 of this bill that compensation for early educators is the issue facing the early care and education sector. Implementing the OEC Compensation Scale would finally pay early educators wages comparable to public school staff with the same degrees.

This is an issue that is very important to me.
Quality early childhood experiences make a tremendous difference in outcomes for children! A decades' long challenge is the lack of appropriate compensation for early care and education providers, which leads to high turnover, the inability to fill positions and inhibits the recruitment of qualified staff. This significantly impacts children; forming a positive child-adult relationship is the most critical factor in outcomes for young children. While this has been an ongoing concern, the dynamics of the pandemic have exacerbated the problem exponentially. In addition, to outcomes for children, lack of quality child care impacts families and industry. We did see changes in public school education when the Educational Enhancement Act was passed many years ago. The same will occur if state resources support increased compensation in early care and education. Please support this increase!
The future of our children and the state depend on it.

What is missing from this bill is how it will be paid for. I urge you to support increasing payments to the state funded early care programs and the creation of a wage equity fund similar to what was created in Washington DC to increase wages for early educators without adding to the child care cost burden that families already face.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions.